

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please delete paragraph [0003] and replace it with the following amended paragraph:

a¹
[0003] In either aforementioned strut configuration, the struts facilitate providing structural support to the overall frame, and structural rigidity for supporting the rotor shaft to facilitate minimizing deflections of the shaft during engine operation. Accordingly, the struts are subjected to stresses induced by the engine during operation. ~~Overtime~~ Over time, flexure of the strut sidewalls due to low cycle fatigue or high cycle fatigue loading may eventually cause fatigue cracking within the strut sidewalls.

Please delete paragraphs [0018] - [0019] and replace these paragraphs with the following amended paragraphs:

G²
[0018] To further facilitate reducing vibrational stresses within strut 60, each strut 60 includes a sleeve assembly 100 extending through openings 102 formed within strut sidewalls 62, and coupling sidewalls 62 together. Sleeve assembly 100 is expandable and is fabricated from a material that is ~~plastic~~ plastically deformable. For example, sleeve assembly 100 may be fabricated from, but is not limited to, stainless steel, or nickel alloy. More specifically, each sidewall 62 includes an outer surface 104 and an inner surface 106 that defines strut cavity 80. A first sidewall 110 and a second sidewall 112 each include a concentrically-aligned opening 102 that extends between sidewall inner and outer surfaces 106 and 104, respectively.

[0019] Opening 102 has a diameter 120 that is approximately equal to, or slightly larger than a largest outer diameter 122 of sleeve assembly 100. Sleeve assembly 100 is mechanically coupled within strut 60 by a plastic deformation process, described in more detail below. More specifically, sleeve assembly 100 extends from first sidewall outer surface 104 across cavity 80 to second sidewall outer surface 104. Sleeve assembly 100 has a length 130 that is slightly larger than a drop distance 132 between first and second sidewall outer surfaces 104, such that when coupled within strut 60, sleeve assembly 100 facilitates minimizing disruptions to airflow passing strut 60. Furthermore, opening 102 is positioned a distance 134 downstream from stiffener 84 such that when sleeve assembly 100 is inserted

through opening 102, sleeve assembly 100 does not contact or disrupt viscoelastic material 94.
